

## NIH CHILD CARE BOARD MEETING MINUTES

October 30, 2003

Building 45 – Conference Room C1-C2

9:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

### Members in Attendance:

Janet Austin, Deborah Fountain, Alisa Green, Lynn Hudson, Valerie Hurt, Susan Koester, Jayne Lura-Brown, Juanita Mildenberg, Barbara Murphy, Kim Plascjak, Henry Primas, Susan Reider, Mary Ellen Savarese, Lisa Strauss, Tim Tosten

Members Absent: Debra Chew, Qin Ryan,

### Liaisons in Attendance:

POPI: Paulina Alvarado, Lucretia Berlinski, Martina Vogel-Taylor, Frank Flomerfelt

ECDC: Anne Schmitz, Beth Levy

### Guests:

Stephen Ficca/ORS, Shirl Eller/ORS

- I. Appointment of New Chairperson:** Susan Reider informed members that Corliss Taylor had accepted a new position at the Office of Personnel Management and would need to resign as the Board's Chairperson. Members voted and officially elected Janet Austin as their new Chairperson and Susan Koester as Assistant to the Chair.
- II. Welcome and Introductions:** Janet Austin began the meeting by welcoming back former members and guests and congratulated the Board's newest members Deborah Fountain, Alisa Green, Jayne Lura-Brown, Henry Primas, and Lisa Strauss. She also introduced Paulina Alvarado who has recently been hired as the new Center Director for POPI.
- III. Approval of Minutes:** Members voted and approved the minutes from the June 5, 2003 meeting.
- IV. NIH and the Role of the Child Care Board:** Stephen Ficca, Director, Office of Research Services (ORS) spoke to members about the following:
  - The NIH is not growing as fast as it had been in previous years however there will be a continued growth in the program services. The NIH is having a difficult time now in meeting the current requirements and needs of its employees, especially with child care services, and this need will continue to grow and become more critical.
  - For the NIH to compete with other agencies and other employment opportunities, we have to be able to provide the kind of work environment that is conducive to parents and families. Quality child care plays a key role.

- As a follow up to one of the recommendations noted in the Board's Annual Report regarding the child care subsidy, the NIH has taken a position in the past that the subsidy is not crucial. The NIH believed that the subsidy would not fully address the needs of the NIH community, especially IRTA's and Fellows.
- The challenge has been in identifying who's in charge/responsible for presenting the subsidy program to the NIH Director and seeking his buy-in on implementing a tuition assistance program. The NIH ORS partnered with the Work Life Center two years ago and made a presentation to the NIH Executive Officers on a proposed subsidy program that was not well received.
- Currently the NIH is working to incorporate all WL programs into the ORS DOES. By acquiring these functions, the ORS will be more effective in presenting a proposal to the NIH for a child care subsidy program.
- Child care has been of interest and a concern for the ORS for some time. Hiring Mary Ellen Savarese to be the NIH Child Care Programs Manager has brought new energy to the program. Continued support and efforts of the Center Directors, the NIH Child Care Board and its participants, have elevated this matter through the NIH and have kept child care in forefront of the NIH leadership.
- The ORS has identified the following areas of concern that will need to be supported by the NIH in order to provide quality child care:
  - Consistency of high quality child care across the NIH.
    - The ORS has a responsibility of leveling and balancing resources and support across all of the centers.
  - Optimizing utilization of resources and maximizing the quality of care.
    - Integrating the child care program in Building T-46 into a permanent building.\*
    - Optimizing space and resources within the existing child care centers.
  - Meeting current and future demands.
    - There has been a dramatic decline in funds allocated to the Building & Facilities budget. This year's budget is only \$80M – a dramatic decline from last year's budget of almost \$700M. The chances of building another child care center on the NIH campus is not as great as it used to be.
    - Administrative revenues – leveraging/integrating outside child care facilities to work with NIH and its employees.
    - Maximizing the NIH Child Care Resource and Referral Service.
    - Implementing a child care subsidy program.

Mr. Ficca concluded by saying that the ORS will truly benefit by having the Work Life Center services under its auspices and feels that they will be able to provide the NIH Child Care Board more support in advocating/initiating child care activities. He thanked members and each of the child care centers for their continued commitment and dedication in providing quality child care services to the NIH and gave members a ceramic mug embossed with the NIH Child Care Board logo as a token of his appreciation.

\* "Integrating the services that are currently provided in a temporary building into a permanent structure."

**V. Orientation to the Board:** Mary Ellen Savarese reviewed with members their responsibilities and duties:

- NIH Child Care Board Charter:
  - The Board's vision can be summarized that productivity and performance of parents in the workforce is enhanced when their children are in quality care. It is the job of the ORS staff to help the Board implement its vision. Members have to participate in developing its vision by:
    - Developing a yearly work/action plan.
    - Volunteer to work on activities outlined with the work/action plan, e.g., Annual Report to the NIH Director.
  - The Board's mission is to promote affordable, accessible, and quality child care for all NIH employees and advise the NIH regarding child care services and policies.
  - The Board's objectives are to: Serve as an advocate for affordable, accessible and quality child care for the NIH community; serve as a forum for NIH child care issues and policies; and advise the NIH with regard to child care issues and policies, e.g., status of existing, quality of care, need for modification of existing services and/or development of new services.
  - Voting members must represent the needs and interests of all the NIH community now and in the future.
  - Board members' duties include:
    - Attending all board meetings – if any member misses two consecutive meetings, Mary Ellen will send them a note of concern.
    - Come prepared to the meetings – review documents prior to the meetings and be able to actively participate in the discussions.
    - Volunteering for committees, i.e., Parenting Festival, Annual Report.
    - Advise the NIH on child care policies.
    - Become educated about the NIH Child Care Programs and employee needs and be willing to speak up and speak out.
    - Look for potential new members for the Board.
    - Meetings are open for anyone who wishes to attend – invite people to attend a meeting.

Valerie Hurt continued the orientation by explaining to members that the NIH Child Care Board:

- The Charter is the primary document that outlines the legal framework of what kinds of activities the Board is governed to do.
- Serves as an advisory to the NIH, in this capacity, the Board cannot lobby Congress for funds to support child care initiatives.
- Is limited in its advisory function and membership is limited to Federal employees.
- The Tribble Amendment is the statute authorizing Federal agencies to allow private entities to operate child care centers on Federal property and provide federal subsidies for these services under certain specified conditions.

The Tribble Amendment requires that at least 50 percent of the centers' spaces be filled by "children who have at least one parent or guardian who is employed by the Federal Government" and that the children of Federal employees will be given priority for any remaining spaces [40 U.S.C. section 490 (b)].

- The NIH Child Care Programs each have a Use Agreement with the NIH. The ORS is responsible for enforcing the terms and conditions outlined within each Use Agreement.
- Any Board member who has a child(ren) enrolled within any of the NIH Child Care Programs will need to obtain a Conflict of Interest waiver from their Ethics Officer.

**VI. Board Work/Action Plan and Calendar:** Mary Ellen Savarese congratulated members on accomplishing many of their activities that were noted in their 2002 – 2003 Work/Action Plan. At the June 5, 2003 meeting members began identifying what activities were going to be included in its 2003 – 2004 Work Action Plan. The Work/Action Plan will include the Board's priorities for 2003 – 2004 as noted in their Annual Report. Members voted and approved the following five activities for its 2003 – 2004 Work/Action Plan:

- 1) Take steps to advance the creation and implementation of a Child Care Subsidy Program for lower-income NIH employees.
- 2) Continue to actively address findings obtained from the 2001 NIH Child Care Programs Needs Assessment by:
  - Improving coordination among existing programs.
  - Promoting child care and parenting resources to the NIH community.
  - Exploring additional child care resources to serve the NIH community.
- 3) Continue efforts to ensure that the NIH Child Care Board reflects the diversity of the NIH workforce.
- 4) Provide input and guidance to the ORS Child Care Program on issues and services, including the development of additional facilities and programs.
- 5) Study the issue of child care benefits for Contractors.

Members will be asked to volunteer to work on small committees as needed throughout its calendar year.

**VII. NIH Child Care Updates:**

- Tim Tosten informed members that as part of the DOES budget for FY'04, he had submitted a proposal and requested funds to build out a child care center within the Rocksprings area that would include Fernwood, Rockledge and Democracy locations. This area is rapidly growing and would be an ideal location for a child care center (close to major commuter routes). The ORS Advisory Committee agreed that the proposal should go forward to the Funding Advisory Reviewing Board (FARB) who approves ORS's budget. Tim was pleased to announce that the FARB approved funding for the new center. The DOES is preparing a Space Justification Document (SJD) to merit a Program of Requirements (POR) to identify space for the new center to accommodate 100 – 150 children. Members will be asked to review and provide input on the POR.

- Tim also indicated that as part of his FY'05 budget he has requested funds to build out a child care center with the Twinbrook area that is also rapidly developing.

**VIII. Announcements:**

- Janet Austin, Susan Koester and Mary Ellen Savarese will be meeting with Dr. Zerhouni, NIH Director on December 18, 2003 to discuss the recommendations outlined in the Board's 2002 – 2003 Annual Report.
- At the December meeting Judy Ashley, LifeWork Strategies, Inc. will attend and present data on the NIH Wait List Management Program for the past 18 months and how it dovetails with the Child Care Resource and Referral Service.
- Members received a copy of the waiver application form and policy for Enrollment of Center Staff Children in NIH Child Care Centers.
- The expansion renovations at the East Child Care Center have been completed and the center is now licensed to provide child care services for infants and toddlers.
- Anne Schmitz announced that ECDC has just been licensed as an Apprenticeship Program in MD. The center will begin mentoring and training Apprentices.
- Pamela Jenkins distributed to the center directors flyers she had prepared for them to hand out to their parents to solicit for Combine Federal Campaign contributions.

**IX. Adjourn:** The meeting was adjourned at 12:05 p.m.

**The next meeting is scheduled for December 11, 2003  
Building 31 – 6C/Room 7**

Prepared by:  
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